Practical Skills Guide for Midwifery

(PSGM)

A Tool for Midwives & Students
Fifth Edition

by Pam Weaver & Sharon K. Evans

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This book is a comprehensive skills guide for direct-entry midwives. The information in this book is designed to assist in preparing students to become proficient in performing the skills required of direct-entry midwives. It is designed to be used as part of a course of study under the supervision of a qualified professional either in an apprenticeship or school setting. It is not intended to provide complete information sufficient to permit the reader to become a direct-entry midwife without supervision as well as additional training and academic study.

The various individuals involved in the process – the authors, the publishers, the midwifery instructors, the examiners, any member of a certifying body, or any member of a licensing board or a midwifery organization who approve the use of this book – cannot be held responsible for the actions of anyone who uses this book for skills mastery or testing, whether or not they receive any credentialing. The examiners' signatures attest to the proficiency of the student on the date tested. The mastery of any skill tested within these pages, by itself, in no way implies any type of credentialing.

The use of the skills herein must be weighed with sound judgment and based on the regulatory guidelines dictated by licensure or the regulatory process within the jurisdiction the midwife practices.

Dedication

To midwives throughout history who have labored to bring to birth what we have today. May we always remember…

"Therefore God dealt well with the midwives… because the midwives feared God."

— Exodus 1:20-21

Acknowledgments

For those who have helped to lay many of the gemstones in the foundation for what has now emerged as the 5th edition of the *Practical Skills Guide for Midwifery*, we are eternally grateful. Although the names of those who helped with this work in the beginning are too numerous to mention, we especially want to recognize: Abby Kinne, CPM; Deborah Schneider, CDM, MICP; Justine Clegg, MS, LM, CPM; Ruth Walsh, RN, CPM; Holly Steiner, RN, CDM; Vicki Penwell, LM, CPM; and Tina Williams.

We lovingly acknowledge our husbands who supported and encouraged us as each of the five editions were created. We are looking forward to the future with you, knowing that the best is yet to come.

Introduction

Midwifery in North America has culminated in a mosaic of art, science and tradition. *The Practical Skills Guide for Midwifery* (PSGM) has found its way into the mainstream of midwifery texts as a tool for both apprenticeship and the increasing number of formal midwifery schools. Its format is adaptable to both models of education and will help ensure a complete course of skills practice. For experienced midwives, it may serve as a guide for clinical review. It is our desire to keep the art and tradition of midwifery alive while maintaining the integrity of the science.

We have welcomed and continue to welcome the input from the broader midwifery community which is reflected in our decision whether to keep or omit some of the skills in this text. Therefore, if the reader remembers that this manual was designed to help standardize teaching and testing as a means of *global* validation of midwifery skills, it will be easier to appreciate its diversity.

The authors recognize that often there are several correct ways of performing a skill, some of which may not be addressed here. As trends in maternity care change, we acknowledge the need for periodic revision of skills. We commit this work with passion to the preservation of midwifery and its various educational routes of entry into the profession.

How to Use this Manual

This comprehensive collection of skills will assist in an organized course of practical midwifery study. We advise, in addition to mastering the skills in this manual, the student obtain and maintain a CPR card (both the adult and newborn), proof of having completed a course in OSHA Guidelines relative to midwifery practice and a Neonatal Resuscitation Certification (American Heart Association/NRP).

The instructor provides the rationale for the skills as well as an understanding of anatomy and physiology relative to each skill. Skills should be demonstrated and repeatedly practiced for proficiency. Role playing and simulation will be helpful for some skills. When it comes to testing, the examiner may be someone other than the instructor. Some skills (those in the Oral Drill section of the skills labs in each chapter) are simply “talk-through” skills to help heighten preparedness for the rare, unexpected birth outcome. For record-keeping, we advise that when each skill is performed correctly, the student make sure the examiner signs both the skill page *and* the Skills Verification page in Part VII.

Simulated Scenarios for Practice

Manikin models and moulage (fake blood, makeup for simulated shock, etc.) are available commercially. However, the student and the instructor can be creative by improvising substitutes. Birthing manikins can be purchased or fashioned. IVs can be practiced on real people or IV arms. Fake blood is easily simulated with water and food coloring for the IV arm. Or , you can use red Jello for estimating and measuring blood loss. Cold cream or light foundation can be used in a shock scenario.

With creativity, you can develop additional scenarios for teaching and practice. Face your worst fears or hardest skills through role-playing. No one likes emergencies, but they become less frightening with more practice. Simulated exams are allowed for those skills which cannot be practiced easily without simulation. Repeated role playing is necessary for skill mastery. Oral Drills should be reiterated step-by-step, as written.

The Examiner's Role

The examiner (whose signature will appear at the end of a skill) may or may not be the primary instructor. There may be several examiners for one student. For instance, the emergency skills may be signed off by a paramedic or the vital sign skills by a nurse. When the student has practiced the skill sufficiently, the examiner simply observes performance and checks off each segment of the skill if it is done correctly and signs and dates the examiner signature line. If the student does not perform correctly, the skill will be practiced and tested again.

The examiner is also advised to sign each skill that is performed correctly in the "Skills Verification" section provided in Part VII and retain copies for their records of any of the Skills Verification pages they sign.

Directions For Testing

1. The examiner should only observe skills within her/his area of expertise and sign off indicating student proficiency. Each skill should be signed off in the Skills Verification pages in Part VII of this book.

2. The student is to take the exam without any coaching or prompting (as opposed to prior practice sessions).

3. The student should not have access to the test (or this book) during the actual exam.

4. The examiner should ensure that the student is tested according to the format presented in this book.

5. When an assistant is needed, the student must give proper directions to the assistant. The examiner may serve as the assistant.

Use with NARM PEP

The Practical Skills Guide for Midwifery (PSGM) is used as a study guide in preparation for skills examinations. The North American Registry of Midwives (NARM) recommends the use of the PSGM as the study guide for the Skills Assessment portion of the NARM Portfolio Evaluation Process. It is recommended that the student refer to the Candidate Information Bulletin (CIB) for both the Written Exam and the Skills Assessment specifications. See the section entitled "Preparing for the NARM Exam." The CIB and Application materials are available on the web at www.narm.org or from:

NARM Applications
PO Box 420
Summertown, TN 38483
Email: applications@narm.org
888-426-1280

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